

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



A Proclamation

Whereas, On June 19th, 1865, two and a half years after President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas with news that the Civil War had ended and that enslaved people were now free; and

Whereas, Major General Granger announced to the residents of Texas: "The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property, between former masters and slaves and the connection heretofore existing between them, becomes that between employer and hired labor"; and

Whereas, The first Juneteenth celebration was held in Texas in 1866. Since then, Juneteenth has been celebrated in communities across the United States, providing an opportunity to mark the emancipation of enslaved people; and

Whereas, On this day, in hundreds of communities across the country, people of all races, nationalities and religions join hands to acknowledge the painful history and lasting, systemic impact of slavery and racial injustice in the United States. Juneteenth is an opportunity to recommit ourselves to the goal of creating a more equal and just society, an effort that continues today,

Now, Therefore, I, Charles D. Baker, Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby proclaim June 19th, 2020, to be,

JUNETEENTH INDEPENDENCE DAY

And urge all the citizens of the Commonwealth to take cognizance of this event and participate fittingly in its observance.

Given at the Executive Chamber in Boston, this nineteenth day of June, in the year two thousand and twenty, and of the Independence of the United States of America, the two hundred and forty-third.

HIS EXCELLENCY

Handwritten signature of Charles D. Baker in blue ink.

CHARLES D. BAKER
GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

Handwritten signature of Karyn E. Polito in blue ink.

KARYN E. POLITO
LT. GOVERNOR OF THE COMMONWEALTH

Handwritten signature of William Francis Galvin in blue ink.

WILLIAM FRANCIS GALVIN
SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH

God Save the Commonwealth of Massachusetts